

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

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TAGS: SPOP, EG
SUBJECT: POPULATION: EGYPTIAN RESPONSE TO CONSULTATIVE
GROUP (CG) MEETING

REF: PARIS 19398

RECENTLY EGYPTIAN PRESS HAS GIVEN AN UNUSUAL AMOUNT OF
COVERAGE TO REPORTS FROM CONSULTATIVE GROUP MEETING OF
DONOR-EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT EGYPT'S POPULATION PROBLEM.

1. FRONT PAGE ARTICLE IN JUNE 17 AL AHAM QUOTES
EGYPTIAN DELEGATION CHAIRMAN EL SAYEH AS SAYING EGYPT
BADLY NEEDS A PROGRAM OF QUOTE POPULATION PLANNING THAT
IS WORKABLE AND EFFECTIVE AND THAT THIS PROGRAM SHOULD
TAKE UTMOST PRIORITY SINCE THE POPULATION EXPLOSION IN
EGYPT PLACES A GREAT BURDEN ON ITS RESOURCES. UNQUOTE.
2. ON THE SAME DAY, IN AN ARTICLE ENTITLED QUOTE THE
ONLY SOLUTION THE ECONOMIC CONSULTANT CONFERENCE IN PARIS
DEMANDS IS THAT EGYPT START IMMEDIATELY TO FACE THE
POPULATION PROBLEM UNQUOTE, AL AKHBAR REITERATED THE SAME
CONCERNS EXPRESSED BY EL SAYEH.
3. FOLLOWING ON JUNE 22, AN EDITORIAL APPEARED IN AL
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AHAM, TEXT OF WHICH FOLLOWS: QUOTE THE EGYPTIAN CABINET
DISCUSSED YESTERDAY THE VARIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS SUBMITTED
BY THE INTERNATIONAL CONSULTING GROUP (ICG) APROPOS THE
SITUATION OF THE EGYPTIAN ECONOMY WHICH REALIZED A BIG
ITS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM. THE PRIME
MINISTER HAS ALSO FOCUSED HIS SPECIAL ATTENTION ON THE
SUBJECT OF THE POPULATION EXPLOSION AS NOTED BY THE ICG.

IN REALITY THIS PROBLEM SHOULD BE GIVEN PRIORITY BY THE GOVERNMENT. IT MUST EVEN BE ATTENDED TO AS THE FIRST PRIORITY. IT IS NOT SUFFICIENT TO DEAL WITH THIS PROBLEM BY USING THIS SYSTEM WHICH WE HAVE CALLED FAMILY PLANNING AND OTHER UNSUCCESSFUL MEASURES, BUT IT IS THE GOVERNMENT'S DUTY TO DRAW UP A PLAN TO DEPRESS THE POPULATION GROWTH RATE BASED ON A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY THAT SEARCHES INTO ALL FACTORS WHICH LEAD TO INCREASED BIRTH RATES. THE STUDY SHOULD ALLOCATE THE AREAS AND COMMUNITIES WHERE THE POPULATION EXPLOSION ORIGINATES, THEN FACE THEM WITH PROPER MEANS AND SUCCESSFUL CONTROL METHODS IN ORDER TO REALIZE AND REACH A BALANCE BETWEEN POPULATION INCREASE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. IN ORDER TO REALIZE THE PEOPLE'S PROSPERITY, THIS BALANCE SHOULD SWING TOWARDS THE SIDE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. THE AVERAGE POPULATION INCREASE IN THE CITIES IS NOT THE SAME AS IN RURAL AREAS. IT IS MUCH LESS IN THE CITIES. THIS UNBALANCE IS A DANGEROUS PHENOMENON WHICH NEEDS TO BE FIRMLY AND IMMEDIATELY DEALT WITH. WE HAVE TO KNOW THAT THE PROBLEM IS NOT ONE OF PROVIDING FOOD FOR A MILLION MOUTHS EXPELLED FROM WOMBS EACH YEAR, BUT OF THE NEED TO PROVIDE THE RIGHT EDUCATION, MEDICAL AND SOCIAL CARE. NO MATTER HOW FAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROCEEDS, WE CANNOT REALIZE THE PROSPERITY AND GENERAL WELFARE WE DESIRE FOR OUR PEOPLE UNLESS THEY RECEIVE EDUCATION, SOCIAL AND HEALTH CARE. UNQUOTE.
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4. COMMENT: PROMINENCE GIVEN POPULATION PROBLEM IN CAIRO PRESS IS ENCOURAGING IN THAT IT APPEARS TO REFLECT INCREASED ATTENTION BEING GIVEN TO SUBJECT BY GOE AND GROWING AWARENESS ON THE PART OF THE PUBLIC. AT THE SAME TIME, REFERENCE IN AL AHRAM TO FAMILY PLANNING AS AN UNSUCCESSFUL MEASURE MAY SUGGEST THAT THE GOE STILL WILL RELY MORE ON FUTURE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AS A BRAKE ON FERTILITY RATHER THAN MORE VIGOROUS EFFORTS IN FAMILY PLANNING' EILTS

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